

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



New **40TH**
ANNIVERSARY
Beginnings

Serving runaway & homeless youth since 1980

newbeginmaine.org



Chris Bicknell
Executive Director



Kelley Nelson
2020 Board President

What COVID-19 couldn't do was change the impact we have had on the lives of thousands of youth over those 40 years.

MILESTONES

2020 marked a milestone for New Beginnings, it was our 40th anniversary year providing services to runaway and homeless youth in Maine. We had planned in-person events with former youth we served giving moving testimonials about how New Beginnings had impacted their lives over the decades, but COVID-19 changed those plans. **What COVID-19 couldn't do was change the impact we have had on the lives of thousands of youth over those 40 years.**

We are constantly in awe of that history, regularly meeting folks who have had a connection to or been helped by the agency in past decades. They inevitably give credit to a single staff person, a particular program, or life-changing experience they had here that marked a significant change in their trajectory from a traumatic childhood to the productive, and most often happy, adults they are now.

Despite COVID-19, we continued with agency plans and services. We implemented agency-wide restructuring to improve services to youth across the agency.

New Beginnings continued its leadership role in Maine's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) that led to the creation of *Hope & Opportunity for Maine* (H.O.ME), Maine's comprehensive plan to end and prevent youth homelessness. We strengthened our statewide Youth Action Board (YAB) with new members who have kept working on multiple fronts to ensure that youth with lived experience have a voice in policy making decisions.

And most importantly, we were here for youth 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Thank you for your support in this unprecedented year.

—Chris & Kelly



40 YEARS OF SERVING MAINE YOUTH

It's been four decades since New Beginnings opened the doors of our very first program to serve youth and families in crisis—the emergency youth shelter which has operated continuously since 1980, and is now called 'Marian's Place.'

Over those 40 years we have served more than 11,000 teens and young adults, growing to offer a full spectrum of housing, outreach, prevention, education, and counseling services to help youth facing homelessness find the safety and opportunities for growth that all young people deserve.

In spring 2020, we said goodbye to two agency leaders—TLP Director Mike Mooney and Shelter Director Marian Carney—who served NB youth with passion and commitment for a combined 53 years! Like Mike and Marian, hundreds of dedicated staff and Board members have made our work with youth possible.

The following pages give a glimpse into how our essential programs have grown and impacted young people's lives over New Beginnings' history.

40 YEARS OF SERVING MAINE YOUTH

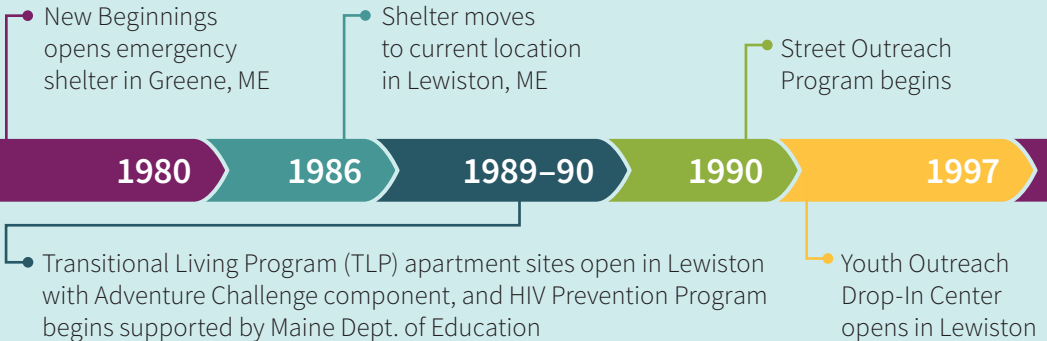


1995–1997

ALICIA

I took advantage of all that was offered and I know I was able to grow because of that.

I heard about New Beginnings because my younger brother went there prior to me. I grew up in an abusive home and knew there must be better out there. One day I just had enough, left home, and checked into the shelter. New Beginnings gave me a safe place free of chaos to be able to go to school and be free. They provided support in ways I probably would not have received otherwise. I'm a working professional now, and I want to give back. I'd tell youth they don't have to do it alone. Asking for help or leaving a bad situation isn't easy, but these programs can help you heal and grow.





SHANE

2002–2004

For the first time in my life I didn't feel so awkward or cowardly to be myself and it set me on a path that had me constantly striving to become a better, more well-rounded person.

I came to New Beginnings a homeless ward of the state. My mother had run off, disappearing without notice. My father was out of the picture – died of an overdose after being released from prison. I was angry a lot, mostly at myself and my life. Been abused for so long, my self-worth was shot. NB is so much more than a shelter. It's a place to live and work on yourself in a supportive environment, to get ready to face life on your own. Staff treated me as an equal and with respect, not talked down to because I was a kid. Without NB I would have been on the streets; in some respects I owe them my life. I was able to become a functioning member of society. They can help you and will help you. But you have to be accepting of this help.

• Outreach expands to Androscoggin, Franklin, and Kennebec counties

• TLP sites added in Lewiston, Farmington, and Augusta

• Current Educational & Employment Support services begin as pilot program for shelter youth

1999–2012

2000

2002–07

2011

2012

• Family mediation services begin; NB begins awarding Dot Larrabee Youth Development Fund scholarships (“Seed Money for Dreams”) to pursue education or job training

• NB purchases former community center and begins fundraising to renovate into expanded Drop-In Center and agency headquarters in Lewiston

2007

The staff had a way of sort of getting us to relax and feel comfortable, but also helped us plan and move ahead.

When I was 17, I was having a pretty bad time. My parents were fighting a lot, I was failing school, and getting into all kinds of trouble. My parents came down on me hard. They had no idea what to do with me. My mom would kick me out when she'd get mad at me. I needed to get out of that situation. New Beginnings gave me a comfortable, safe place to sleep. I even learned to cook some while I was there, which I'd never learned from my parents. It was the first sort of stable living situation and happiness I'd had. They helped get me situated for adulthood—by eighteen I had my first apartment and job in the medical field. The fact that anyone would care about me or try to help me was astonishing. NB instilled in me a sense of caring about the community, made me more compassionate as a person. As unlikely as it seems sometimes, the world is full of good people. Don't give up.



MATT

- NB becomes fiscal sponsor of Outright L/A

- NB pilots PowerSource Plus social-emotional literacy/mindfulness curriculum; incorporated into all programs after successful evaluation showed improvement in youths' emotional regulation

2013

2014

2015

2016

- Outreach, Drop-In, Educational Support, and administrative offices move into Ann Geiger Center (134 College St., Lewiston) after successful \$1.25M building campaign

- NB begins offering low barrier trauma-informed mental health services



2017-2018

BROOKE

*Thanks to NB,
I got my education,
a roof over my
head and I am
forever thankful.
Tough times never
last but tough
people do!*

My life before NB was very tough. I grew up with an abusive father and a battle between divorced parents. I was constantly in and out of group homes, always a new temporary home. I spent most of my time alone wondering what I did to deserve this. I came to NB because I knew I needed help. They offered services and showed me they not only care about my wellbeing but my emotional state. From the second I walked into outreach, they welcomed me and allowed me to work with them at my pace. Without NB Larrabee Fund scholarships, I wouldn't have my CRMA and CNA certificate. Now I'm a mom to a beautiful 2-year-old and a nursing student who plans to dedicate her career to helping others.

• NB launches 100-day challenge to identify and support Franklin County rural homeless youth

• NB helps establish first statewide Youth Action Board to ensure homeless and system-involved youth have a voice in policy-making

2017

2018

2019

2020

Maine receives \$3.35M HUD Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) grant with NB as lead agency

NB celebrates 40 years of services and renames youth shelter Marian's Place

COVID-19 RESPONSE

2020 was a challenging year for everyone on the planet! At New Beginnings we spent a huge amount of time and energy responding to the new realities of COVID-19.

On March 16th we began adjusting our services based on rapidly evolving advice coming from the state and CDC. By April those who could work from home under Maine's "Stay Safe at Home" order did so, and social distance and sanitization became top priorities to prevent COVID-19.

New COVID-19 requirements forced New Beginnings to get creative. Gathering restrictions meant a temporary closure of the Youth Outreach Drop-In Center, so we increased our mobile food pantry, delivering food boxes and supplies to youth in need three days a week. Residential sites (Marian's Place shelter + TLP) stayed fully

operational with protocols in place to keep both youth and staff safe. Mental health, prevention, and education/employment support offered outdoor and video appointments and trainings. In June, Drop-In and admin offices began to reopen with the rest of the state.

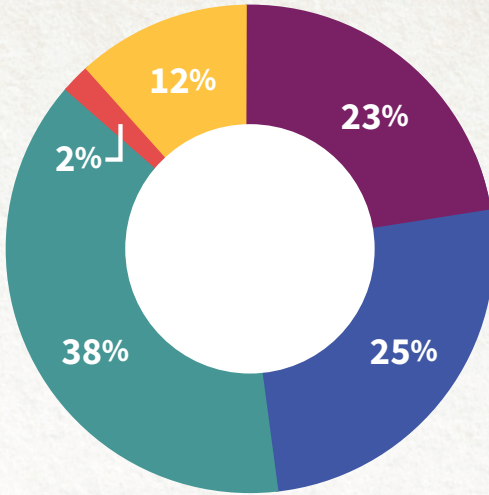
Throughout 2020, our safety measures and dedicated staff were able to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within New Beginnings! Like many essential businesses, we struggled with vacant staff positions that put an extra burden on our employees to cover empty shifts during an extremely challenging and stressful year. We received a significant PPP loan and were able to pay all direct care staff hazard pay during the initial stay at home order. Marian's Place shelter became an official BinaxNOW rapid testing site. By the end of 2020, we were already looking ahead to schedule an early 2021 vaccination clinic for our staff and youth, doing our part to bring the world closer to herd immunity. We are truly grateful to our employees and Board who have made this possible, and to our supporters and funders who continue to make sure New Beginnings is here for youth.



◀ While our Lewiston Youth Outreach/Drop-In Center was temporarily closed to in-person services, our street outreach workers tripled mobile food pantry deliveries of food, masks, gloves, and cleaning and hygiene supplies to youth.

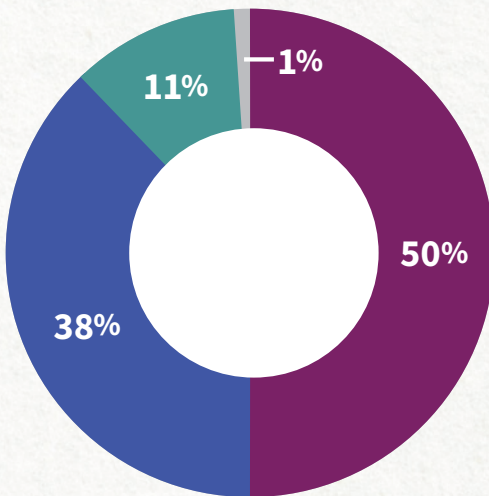
2020 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

2020 Annual Budget – \$3,022,668



INVESTMENT BY PROGRAM

- Shelter
- Transitional Living
- Mental Health
- Street Outreach & Community Services
- Administration



REVENUE BY FUNDING SOURCE

- State
- Federal
- Private & Local Funds
- United Way

Budget overview based on most current un-audited financials.

State Funding Sources: MaineHousing, ME Depts. of Education, CDC, Corrections, and Health & Human Services.

Federal Funding Sources: HUD, FEMA/EFSP, MaineCare, and Runaway & Homeless Youth Act (HHS/ACYF).

Private & Local Sources: Foundation grants, fundraising, municipal/City of Lewiston CDBG, and donations.



In August 2020, we dedicated the shelter program in honor of retiring Shelter Director Marian Carney. Photo credit: Daryn Slover/Sun Journal

Marian's Place

at New Beginnings is the only program in Maine that is licensed to provide 24-hour emergency housing and support for youth ages 10–19 years old who are runaway, homeless, or facing intense family conflict.

Marian's Place has served over 8,500 young people since opening as an emergency youth shelter in 1980. Since 2000, the program has engaged families in no-cost mediation to prevent youth homelessness. In addition to the basic services of the shelter and three meals per day, youth participate in case management, educational and employment support, recreational activities, prevention groups and our Power Source Plus curriculum designed to improve emotional regulation and decision-making.

In 2020 Marian's Place provided over 1,500 nights of housing where youth were safe and off the streets, served over 4,700 meals, and reunified 71% of youth in the program with family or discharged them to stable housing.

24/7 HELPLINE (207) 795-4070

OUTREACH

For 30 years, New Beginnings' Outreach Program has worked to find and engage young people ages 14–21 who are at risk for homelessness and exploitation. Staff offer services to meet immediate safety needs (food, clothing, shelter referrals) and comprehensive case management to connect youth to resources and increase stability. The Outreach Program main office and Drop-In Center are located in downtown Lewiston, with rural satellite offices serving Franklin and Kennebec counties.

In 2020, more than 520 youth came to Drop-In for meals, emergency supplies, recreation, referrals, and social support. We served 6735 meals including over 1000 mobile pantry food boxes. 75 homeless youth worked individually with staff to



achieve their goals, with 76% finding stable housing. In the first few months of 2020 (before Drop-In's temporary closure during COVID-19 indoor gathering restrictions) youth accessed groups, educational & employment support, arts activities, and the free weekly wellness clinic. Over 1,600 contacts were made via urban and rural street outreach in 2020.



MENTAL HEALTH

Youth who are at risk of homelessness are a diverse population facing multiple challenges, and they need flexible mental health care. The traditional model of keeping a weekly therapy appointment has not worked well for the youth we serve; our team meets youth wherever they are.

New Beginnings' services all focus on engaging and building relationships with

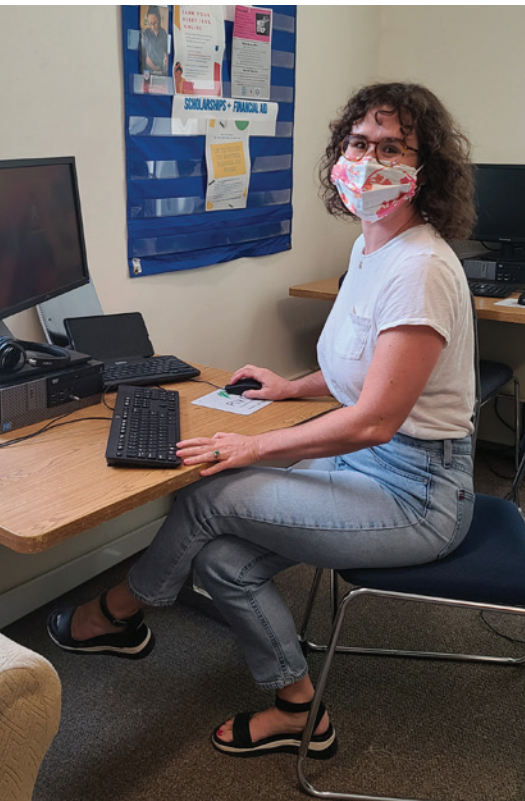
young people who are not connecting well other places. Mental health services include individual counseling, Power Source groups, and family therapy sessions for parenting youth. These services are available to any New Beginnings' youth, as well as to greater Lewiston- Auburn area teens and young adults who may be homeless, dealing with intense family conflict, or living in unstable situations. In 2020 the mental health program provided individual counseling for 46 clients and PowerSource social-emotional groups for 38 youth.

YOUTH ACTION BOARD (YAB)

The Maine Statewide Youth Action Board (YAB) sponsored by New Beginnings is a forum for young people ages 14–24 to discuss and advocate about issues and resources affecting their peers with lived experiences including homelessness, poverty, and interaction with systems of care (child welfare or foster care/adoption, Juvenile Justice/Corrections, mental health/treatment, etc.). YAB members strive to influence positive systemic change while highlighting the values of respect and diversity amongst its membership.

In 2020, the YAB participated and provided leadership in Maine’s Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP) and Maine’s Homeless Continuum of Care.

Members also created events to improve community perceptions of young people (see newbeginmaine.org/signs-of-hope).



EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

In 2020, 82 youth from New Beginnings’ programs received educational and employment support from Ed Support specialists. These youth met with staff over the course of 704 appointments, where they received one-on-one virtual tutoring, engaged in career exploration and employment help, and reconnected to their own academic potential.

Education & Employment Support Program staff are experts in providing trauma-informed educational and employment support services that help youth succeed in their studies and complete high school, giving them their best chance to become stable, self-sufficient adults.

Staff met with youth one on one (in person, or virtually, under COVID-19 protocols) and addressed each young person’s unique needs, from supporting enrolled youth with individualized, skills-based tutoring and homework help to helping youth who have been disconnected from school for years take their first steps towards continuing their education.



TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM

New Beginnings' Transitional Living Programs (TLP) provide supportive housing in Lewiston, Augusta, and Farmington for up to 18 months to help homeless youth ages 16–21 develop the skills they need to live on their own.

The Transitional Living Program (TLP) offers safe and stable housing options for homeless youth in Maine. Our community-based apartment living exposes youth to real-life experiences in education, employment, roommate and household management, and other personal growth experiences that teens need to successfully transition to adulthood. Living at the TLP prepares young people to successfully find and maintain housing after they leave the program. In 2020 the TLP hosted over 7,000 nights of housing where youth were safe and off the streets and reunified 77% of youth in the program with family or discharged them to stable housing.

PREVENTION & TRAINING

The Prevention and Training Program coordinates effective, skills-based education and risk-reduction counseling to youth in all New Beginnings' programs to increase youths' knowledge, reduce harm, and decrease risk of HIV transmission, unintended pregnancy, substance abuse, and other risky behaviors. In partnership with Maine's Dept. of Education, New Beginnings also sponsors evidence-based HIV prevention training for agencies and schools serving high-risk youth. In 2020, we facilitated in-person and virtual/online trainings for more than 450 educators and youth providers across the state, including training 75 in welcoming and creating safety for LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) youth.

2020 DONORS

We are grateful for every gift and all of our supporters! Giving circle donors are listed below; names of all 2020 donors are available online at newbeginmaine.org/annual-reports. In-kind and holiday donors for 2020 are listed in the spring newsletter at newbeginmaine.org/spring-2021

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE - Donors contributing \$1,000 or more in 2020

Adoff-Teegan Fund, Coastal Community Foundation	Head to Toe Physical Therapy	Nancy Horie
Agnes M. Lindsay Trust	Healthy Neighborhoods, L-A Metro Chamber	Northeast Bank
Androscoggin Bank	James Pittman	Norway Savings Bank
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Freya Olafson	Mechanics Savings Employees	The Hartford Community Giving
Good Shepherd Food Bank		Town Fair Tire Foundation
Great Falls Federal Credit Union		United Way of Androscoggin County
Greene/Bourgeois Family		

CHANGEMAKERS CIRCLE - Donors making recurring or monthly gifts in 2020

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Al & Martha Spencer	Greene/Bourgeois Family	Mandi Stetson
Alexis Withers	James & Kathryn Fyfe	Marian & Chip Carney
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**concluded service 2020*



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newbeginmaine.org

New ^{40TH} ANNIVERSARY Beginnings

Serving runaway & homeless youth since 1980

*New Beginnings is funded in part by the State of Maine and US Departments of Health & Human Services, Family & Youth Services Bureau, Housing & Urban Development, and United Way.
Photo credit (bottom row, left): Andree Kehn/Sun Journal*